

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Ms. Camilla C. Williams on 10/1/2009.

The application has been amended as follows:

Claim 3, line 2, "received in a groove" was replaced by -- received in the groove --.

Claim 5, line 5, insert -- and a groove in the protruding portion of the bar -- after the word "in the keyed slot,"

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: Claims 5 and 31 have not been rejected using prior art because no references, or reasonable combination thereof, could be found which disclose or suggest a handle assembly for a detachable scalpel blade comprising: a bar is bent and a groove is approximately parallel to a longitudinal axis, in combination with the rest of the claimed limitations as set forth in claims 5, 31. As to claim 23, the prior arts do not teach the invention including a handle assembly for a detachable scalpel blade comprising: a collet has a proximal end, and a through bore within which a blade bar is positioned, wherein a collet core has a slit and at least one face sloping towards the slit, in combination with the rest of the claimed limitations as set forth in claim 23.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Victor X. Nguyen whose telephone number is (571) 272-4699. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (8-4.30 P.M.).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, AnhTuan Nguyen can be reached on (571) 272-4963. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/VN/

/Todd E Manahan/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3734